

As it was not possible to gather for 'Momentum' this year, a bookmark was sent to our Church secretaries and Ministers reassuring all of our prayer for each other at this time. Craig Gardiner, South Wales Baptist College, kindly composed the poem, 'Gathering Momentum' and Jonty Langley, BMS prepared the prayer. Thanks to the BMS for the design work. We have some spare bookmarks available and if you would like one then please contact the office.

GATHERING MOMENTUM

But for isolation,
today we would have -

gathered
for 'Momentum'
and with momentum
seeking new momentum

in the movement of the saints

gathered
for God
and with Christ
seeking the Spirit;

but the communion of momentum
and momentum of communion
eternally ripples social distance
to walk with
and watch over
one another and the world,

at a pace ordained by the praises
of infants
who sometimes pause
and cry,
and wait,
and watch,
and pray:

So welcome to today's Momentum

Come, be gathered
in to the *momentum* for today.

Craig Gardiner, 2020, for Momentum

*In a year when we cannot
gather physically for
Momentum, let us gather as
one Body in prayer.*

Pray for:

— All those who mourn in this
season

That they would have the
space to mourn and the
comfort of the Holy Spirit

— All those in financial need
That they would know God's
provision and his people's
open-handedness

— All those struggling with
loneliness
That they would be blessed
with community and that we
might bless them

MOMENTUM




In this year of 'Prayer 2020' some churches are coming together across Wales using Zoom to pray together. You'd be welcome to join us as we consider where God is at work in our nation. Please pass this on to your church family.

Please note:
You need to register in advance to obtain the Zoom link.



**PRAYER
FOR
WALES
2020**

**7-8 pm
Tuesday
28th July**

 Baptist Union of Wales

presence in **the midst of these situations**, that we might continue to be effective in our witness and devotion in a changing landscape.

We therefore considered three areas of prayer which included personal renewal, justice and mission. Each section was introduced by different people, followed

BAPTIST UNION OF WALES - PRAYER 2020 EVENT

Isaiah 40: 31 declares;

"Those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint."

The above verse calls us to place our hope in Jesus and assures us that as we trust Him we will find strength to follow Jesus through this life. It was in the light of this reality that the

English-speaking churches of the Union came together as one to seek God, that we might know his blessing and power working in and through us.

As we came to prayer, we were aware of the issues that we have all faced over recent months through the impact of Covid-19 and witnessing the Black Lives Matter campaign. Both these issues have been life defining moments in our history. Therefore, it was only right to come to the God of history and seek his

by worship and prayer led by voices from all parts of Wales.

Many will know this year has been a year of prayer for the Union and it was good to conclude before the summer as we began, looking to Jesus and finding fresh strength to walk with him through the remainder of the year. Our thanks to everyone who was able to attend this virtual gathering.

*Revd Jonathan Forman,
Blaenau Gwent*

PRAYER FOR OUR WELSH SPEAKING CHURCHES

**Impressions of a Prayer Meeting led by Derek Rees, Isaias Grandis and Rhun Murphy
by Arwel E Jones, Caernarfon, someone who didn't really want to be there!**

Sometimes, if we're honest, we have a tendency to do things out of duty rather than love or enthusiasm and that indeed was my experience on Tuesday, 23 June. Our mid-week meeting in Caersalem, Caernarfon had been postponed as an online prayer meeting had been organized by the Baptist Union of Wales and we were duty bound to join in! With little energy and few expectations we dutifully logged on to the meeting and to our great surprise we experienced a number of remarkable blessings!

Firstly, it was good to see some familiar faces at a time when we are all having to keep our distance from each other. But, and with all due respect to friends who were at the meeting, it was even better to see a number of new faces. In our small Welsh-speaking Christian circles we tend to think that if we're not related to everybody then at least we know everybody or to whom they are related! We thank God that His mind and plans are greater and more expansive than we could ever imagine and that He works across our country among people we do not yet know.

Secondly, we worshipped together,

although that sounds like a strange thing to say at a time when we cannot meet in the same place! Being part of worship led from Carmarthen, Swansea and Caernarfon was a privilege and there was a real sense of worshipping together – regardless of the geographical distance. We were brought together into the presence of the Heavenly Father who welcomes his children with such grace and compassion. The spirit of worship was delightful, and His company was even more delightful.

Thirdly, the prayers. We were led to think and pray for various areas and people, from our country's youth to the most vulnerable, from the future of our diverse churches and the nature of our mission to a world that really needs to hear about "a vibrant hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead". Praying together – yes, the word "together" emerges again – if the gates of hell cannot defeat the church, what hope do a few miles distance and a poor internet link have!!! God's people meeting TOGETHER, learning TOGETHER, worshipping TOGETHER, and praying

TOGETHER.

Some will ask what difference prayer makes but the Bible makes two things very clear. First, our Lord wants us to pray - "Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God." Although not every answer to prayer is exactly what we would like to hear.

Secondly, prayer changes us. How can we come into the presence of our Lord who gave His life for us without being changed ourselves? And change is a must, now and whenever we get into some sort of new normality. No doubt, we as the people of God, will need to do some things differently and we shall see, over time, what that means in practice. But the most important change will be, if we as His people allow Him to change us to be disciples who give way to Him, to serve Him truly and act on His behalf in a broken and destitute country and communities. Well, that's something to pray for, and not only when we're in the mood but when everything feels like a duty!

BACK TO NORMAL?

For many it has felt like a long wait before being able to worship again in the chapel building. For some it can't come quickly enough and for others there are understandable concerns about continuing to stay safe, especially in the winter months.

However you feel, one thing that will be true for both is that things will not go fully back to normal for a while. For some of our chapels, the space available will restrict numbers able to attend; we know that singing is not permitted at the moment; social distancing will limit opportunities for community and conversation. Perhaps going to chapel on Sunday will feel more like the waiting room at the dentist rather than the familiar friendly gatherings? Can worship be sanitised and sterile?

Of course wanting to 'get back to normal' is a perfectly natural response. There is comfort in the familiar. Like a favourite armchair that we've sat in for years, it has become moulded to just the way we like it! But it's worth asking the

question, was the way we worshipped together working that well anyway? It might have been comfortable for me and my needs, but was it working for those who weren't coming to worship?

During this period of lock down a number of churches have found that being forced out of the building has connected them with a much greater number of people. People who would never attend a chapel on Sunday, have found a safe place to join a service. For the housebound or people with disabilities – suddenly church has become more inclusive and accessible. Working families with all kinds of Sunday commitments have found it easier to sit down as a family and worship together when the one hour slot on Sunday never quite worked. Suddenly the wider connections we prayed for before lock down have become possible.

Long before the Covid-19 pandemic, many of us in our churches have been living in our safe, comfortable Christian bubble. Maybe it's time to

burst that bubble and get back to sharing the abundant and all transforming life of Jesus with our neighbours and friends. We may not yet know what the 'new normal' will look like, but before we rush back to our building, maybe it's worth asking the question, is there anything we need to take with us as we relearn how to be church?

To consider:

1. If we had to do face this all over again what would you do differently? How would you prepare the church to live out its Christian faith in lock down?
2. Will you continue to offer some kind of online content to reach those who won't, or can't, come to a building on Sunday?
3. Could you work with other churches to share that additional work and pool your creative resources?
4. How do you express your Christian faith in the street where you live?

*Reverend Simeon Baker
Director of Mission*

Prayers For Thanksgiving

2020
YEAR OF
PRAYER



'Lord, teach us to pray'

When our BUW 'Year of Prayer' first began, who could have imagined that 2020 would unfold in such an unexpected and unprecedented way. Without a doubt, 2020 will be remembered as one of the most difficult and challenging years of the twenty-first century. With normal activities suspended and the doors of our chapel buildings closed in a way never experienced before, it has been a year of challenge and change for many congregations.

Nevertheless, despite the restrictions

on meeting and communal worship, we give thanks there can be no restriction on prayer. Throughout the year earnest and faithful prayer has continued and it has been encouraging to hear how several churches have succeeded to hold prayer meetings online and over the telephone during this period.

As part of Prayer 2020, the Union has continued to publish and distribute regular 'prayer packs' containing resources and suggestions to encourage congregations to pray. At present, we are working on our final pack of the series, 'Prayers of Thanksgiving' which will contain resources and materials for use during the harvest season.

This pack, which will be distributed at the beginning of September, will contain a series of harvest themed reflections and prayers. The pack will also include a special section considering how some of our ministers, churches and associations have responded to recent challenges and changes, along with their prayer

requests and suggestions.

We hope that this final pack will be of help and encouragement as we continue to seek the Lord as one Baptist family throughout Wales during this difficult and challenging time. We would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who have contributed to the various prayer packs and all those who have joined us in the effort to make 2020 a year of renewed prayer.

As we continue to pray together, we'd love to hear how you and your church have been taking the opportunity to make prayer a focus during 2020. Please send us your stories and reports via email to simeon@ubc.cymru

"Seek the LORD while he may be found; call on him while he is near."
Isaiah 55:6

*Dr Christian Williams,
BUW Projects Officer*

REOPENING OUR CHAPELS



On 10 July 10 the Welsh Government announced that chapels could reopen for worship when it was safe to do so and guidelines were prepared for this purpose. The Union has now prepared a document which sets out some of the main aspects of what needs to be considered when preparing to reopen the chapel, and was sent to all Church Secretaries and Ministers at the end of July.

As an Union, we have encouraged churches not to rush into reopening but to take time to consider the full requirements and to aim at possibly reopening at the beginning of September.

Before opening the chapel a thorough **risk assessment** should be undertaken so as to minimise the risk of transmitting the virus. **Social distancing** and appropriate **hygiene** measures will need to be in place.

The Government guidelines should be followed and you should also seek further advice from your insurer.

Be realistic about what you can achieve and don't forget about those who will be continuing to self-isolate and unable to attend services. You might want to ensure that alternative worship arrangements are in place for the foreseeable future.

The following links provide the relevant guidance and will also refer to additional documents that should be consulted:

Welsh Government: Guidance on reopening places of worship: coronavirus:

<https://gov.wales/guidance-reopening-places-worship-coronavirus>
<https://www.ecclesiastical.com/latest-news/opening-places-of-worship-after-lockdown/>

*Reverend Judith Morris,
BUW General Secretary*

COVID - 19 MESURAU AMDDIFFYNNOL
PROTECTIVE MEASURES

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>GOLCHWCH EICH DWYLO</p> <p>WASH YOUR HANDS</p> <p>Defnyddiwch y diheintydd neu golchwch eich dwylo wrth ddod i mewn i'r capel. Use sanitiser or wash your hands as you enter the chapel.</p> | <p>CADWCH EICH PELLTER</p> <p>KEEP YOUR DISTANCE</p> <p>Cadwch eich pellter trwy aros 2 fetr ar wahân. Practise social distancing by keeping 2 metres apart.</p> |
| <p>PESWCH NEU THISIAN</p> <p>COUGH AND SNEEZE</p> <p>Cofiwch beswch neu thisian i fewn i'ch penelin neu hancs bapur. Remember to cough and sneeze into your elbow or a tissue.</p> | <p>ARHOSWCH GARTREF OS YDYCH YN DOST</p> <p>STAY AT HOME IF YOU ARE ILL</p> <p>Os ydych yn dioddef un o symptomau Covid-19 arhowsch gartref. If you suffer from one of the Covid-19 symptoms stay home.</p> |

Ffynhonnell: World Health Organisation

**Coronafeirws
Coronavirus**

**CADWCH DRAW ER MWYN
ACHUB BYWYDAU**

**KEEP YOUR DISTANCE
SAVE LIVES**

**ANNUAL MEETING
BAPTIST UNION OF
WALES 2020**

The Annual Meeting will be held this year via Zoom video conferencing on

**Tuesday,
13 October at 7.00pm**

**A WARM WELCOME IS
EXTENDED TO ALL**

Details about the meeting will be circulated during September

